

TRIBUTE TO MR. GEORGE  
GRUETT

**HON. JO ANN EMERSON**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 7, 2005*

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of Mr. George Gruett, who has served the Mississippi Valley region and our Nation for 25 years as executive vice president of the Mississippi Valley Flood Control Association. Up and down the river, residents and landowners have been lucky for the expertise and tireless advocacy of Mr. Gruett. His work on their behalf has made the region safer for them and their families, as well as preserved vital river transportation.

The Mississippi River is a strange, and sometimes difficult, neighbor to us in southern Missouri. We are struck by her beauty in times of calm and heartbroken by her unstoppable power in times of flood. Living along the Mississippi River presents unique challenges, which Mr. Gruett has made his life's work to meet.

The infrastructure needs of flood protection are staggering. Levees, pumping stations, locks and dams, berms, floodwalls and river management are all critical components of preserving our relationship with the Mississippi River. Managing the plans, construction and upkeep of these facilities demands a rare, dedicated individual. For 25 years, Mr. Gruett has been that person.

Born and raised in west Tennessee, Mr. George Gruett is no stranger to the service of his country. He is a veteran of World War II, during which he served with the 12th Air Force in Europe. He was educated in civil engineering at the University of Alabama and the University of Mississippi and spent 35 years with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers before joining the Mississippi Valley Flood Control Association.

Mr. Gruett has received the Meritorious Civilian Service Award and earned a Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Rivers Museum. He has been a faithful guardian of our delicate relationship with the Mississippi River in southern Missouri. I thank him for his great service to the residents of Missouri's Eighth Congressional District and to the people of our Nation.

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MONTGOMERY BUS  
BOYCOTT

SPEECH OF

**HON. JOHN LEWIS**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 6, 2005*

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, December 1, 1955, became a history-making day, when a brave and courageous Rosa Parks committed one simple act. By sitting down and refusing to give up her seat on a city bus, Rosa Parks ignited a non-violent revolution in America. By sitting down she inspired many of us to stand up and become participants in the modern-day Civil Rights Movement. America is a better country, and we are a better people today, just 50 years later.

The action of the brave and courageous African Americans of Montgomery, under the leadership of Martin Luther King Jr., ushered in a period of great hope and great expectation in America. During the past 50 years, we have seen unbelievable changes. We have seen the end of segregation in public transportation and in places of public accommodation. And the signs that said WHITE and COLORED have come tumbling down. In 50 years, we have witnessed the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1957, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Fair Housing Act of 1968.

It is my hope that as we pause and take note of what happened in Montgomery 50 years ago, another generation will be inspired to take a stand. I hope another generation will be inspired to speak up and to speak out for what is fair, for what is right and for what is just in this nation and the world.

TRIBUTE TO MR. WILLIAM T.  
POWERS

**HON. MARY BONO**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 7, 2005*

Mrs. BONO. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize and applaud the dedication and tireless service of my dear friend and constituent, Mr. William T. Powers. I ask all of my colleagues to join with me today in saluting this outstanding American.

Mr. Powers has had a long and distinguished career within the banking community. Following 21 years of employment with the Bank of America, Mr. Powers relocated to the desert. He soon saw the realization of his professional goal when, in 1993, he joined the First Community Bank of the Desert (now Pacific Western Bank) as President and Chief Executive Officer. The notable achievements of Mr. Powers' professional career are a reflection of his seemingly boundless capacity for hard work and service.

I would like to give special recognition and thanks to Mr. Powers for the tremendous community service that he has, and continues to render the citizens of the desert. I have personally seen the positive impact of his many efforts on the community in which I live. Mr. Powers has served as the President of many organizations throughout the years including; the American Cancer Society, United Way of the Desert, College of the Desert Foundation, Palm Desert Chamber of Commerce, Indian Wells Desert Symphony. He has also served as the Director or President and Tournament Chairman of the Bob Hope Chrysler Classic since 1998.

Mr. Powers has been joined in his efforts by his lovely wife, Anita, who is also a beloved community figure. The Powers' have been partners in so many efforts that have greatly enhanced the desert community. Together they have raised two children and are the proud grandparents of four.

Mr. Powers stated that the best way he knows how to give back to the community is through excellent service and that that philosophy has permeated his personal and professional life. I join with my community this week in commending and thanking Mr. Powers for his great community service as the Boy

Scouts of America honor him as the Distinguished Citizen of the Year. I encourage my colleagues to join me in recognizing and celebrating the many contributions of Mr. William T. Powers.

IN RECOGNITION OF MARSHA  
PETTY—ARKANSAS'S 2005–2006  
TEACHER OF THE YEAR

**HON. MIKE ROSS**

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 7, 2005*

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, it is with tremendous pride that I rise today to recognize Arkansas's 2005–2006 Teacher of the Year, Marsha Petty of Texarkana, Arkansas.

A cum laude graduate from Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Marsha has been teaching for 29 years and is an 11th grade chemistry teacher at Arkansas High School in Texarkana. There are few jobs more important, more rewarding, and more difficult than that of a teacher.

I have always held a public school education in the highest regard. As parents, educators, and public officials, we have an obligation, a moral duty, to ensure that students, from pre-school to high school and beyond receive the highest quality education possible. By properly educating our students and providing them with the tools they need in order to become successful adults, they will thrive in today's fast-paced and technological world.

The most important component to our children's education is our teachers. Today more than ever, our educators face new obstacles and challenges. As the son of public school educators, I have a deep respect and gratitude for all educators and their personal commitment to our children.

America is deeply indebted to top-notch educators, such as Marsha Petty, for their continued excellence in the classroom and commitment to our students. Today's teachers shape the very foundation of America's future. It is an honor to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Marsha as the 2005–2006 Arkansas Teacher of the Year.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF DR.  
TJ OWENS

**HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 7, 2005*

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, today I rise with my colleague, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, to honor the life of Dr. TJ Owens of Gilroy, California who recently passed away. I rise to honor a life dedicated to family and the community. His hard work and compassion for those often overlooked helped to illuminate a path of social awareness and service for others to follow. TJ was the person who made a difference in countless lives, giving them hope and showing them that they could achieve their dreams.

The second of nine children, TJ Owens was born on February 4, 1937, in Shreveport, Louisiana to General and Maxine Owens. When TJ was seven, his father moved the family to